"Federal Aid to Education"
—An Exchange of Views

THE

Commonweal

Church and State

The Polish Caesar

by Matthew M. Mestrovic

End of an Era?

St. Patrick's Day, 1961

by David Lowe

Three Existentialists

Variations on a Theme

by Sister Helen James John

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Blackfriars

BLACKFRIARS, the monthly review edited by the English Dominicans, was founded in 1920. Father Vincent McNabb, defining its aims in the first number, characteristically remarked that its service of the truth might lead to as short a career as that of the Holy Innocents. In fact BLACKFRIARS is forty years old and through the years it has continued to apply a consistent Christian judgment to those issues in the contemporary world which are too often neglected or evaded.

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THIS WEEK

Week by Week 91

When Bishops Speak
by James O'Gara 94

The Polish Caesar
by Matthew M. Mestrovic 95

St. Patrick's Day, 1961
by David Lowe 98

Two Poems 99

Variations on a Theme
by Sister Helen James John 100

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 103

"Federal Aid to Education"
An Exchange of Views 104

Of Note: Ten Ready Reasons
by Dennis Clark 106

Books 107

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

A PREREQUISITE

CRITICISM comes as second nature to a journal of opinion such as The Commonweal. Without voicing it continually this magazine would hardly get very far in interpreting the current scene. This would be true regardless of whatever irascibility, feelings of superiority, or disloyal sentiments unfriendly readers might ascribe to its various editors and contributors. And this journal's approach naturally includes both criticism of others and realistic scrutiny of our own ways and institutions.

The tendency to question the way things are going on the national scene, and to take issue with various American policies toward foreign peoples, is doubtless less pronounced when it has to deal with the errors or inadequacies of an Administration which is breaking out along new paths. It is more difficult to be critical of our Government when it is making some strenuous efforts to meet the challenges that face the United States than in a period of comparative official stagnation. Criticism was decidely pronounced in our pages in the latter stages of the Eisenhower era, when we felt that, instead of trying to soothe the public conscience and seeking to dispel any popular anxiety, Washington should have been alerting the citizenry to the ground America was losing to the Sino-Soviet axis and acknowledging the danger confronting this nation and the free world.

This difference between the new Administration and its immediate predecessor stood out in sharp outline during the recent Presidential campaign. It was notably highlighted in the comments of the two rival candidates on the state of the national defenses. Here the value of negative criticism itself came into question. Whereas Mr. Kennedy insisted that Americans face up to the weak spots in the national defense picture, Mr. Nixon charged that his opponent's repeated insistence on these alleged deficiencies actually weakened the nation, lowered national confidence, impaired morale. If it is traditional for incumbents seeking reelection in this country to insist that the current state of national well-being was seldom better—and for their rivals to stress what is wrong—this contrast last fall was an extreme one.

However, reform comes about slowly through American governmental processes. The remarkable T.V. documentary, "Harvest of Shame," portrays but one of the lamentable situations that continues little changed after three months of the Kennedy Administration. Others readily come to mind: the plight of the Negro community North and South, of the economically depressed areas and the vast numbers of chronically unemployed, of the numerous mentally ill, of those living in spreading and deteriorating city slums, etc. Despite the new Administration's more imaginative approach to foreign policy and its most competent personnel, the way there too is studded with difficulties. There is little reason at present to abandon a largely critical approach.

WHERE CATHOLICS as Catholics are concerned, the problem of criticism is obviously more delicate. Discussion seems to take on a more personal character. For one thing, the sacrifices entailed in establishing and maintaining Catholic institutions make them particularly sensitive to criticism. Yet there is a growing realization in recent years of the extent to which self-criticism serves as an important preliminary to better things. At the recent Catholic education meeting in Atlantic City, for example, a Kennedy-Nixon type argument appeared to shape up on the subject of self-criticism of American Catholic education. Two

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superintendents of large diocesan school systems saw danger to "public and Catholic" confidence because of the continuing criticism; Father Hesburgh of Notre Dame was in the forefront of those speakers who, instead, challenged the educators present to reexamine their methods and their goals.

Organizational self-criticism in these days of all-pervasive communications tends invariably to be public. It exposes certain weaknesses for all to see. Yet the very willingness to take on this added burden for the sake of a greater good inspires nothing but wholesale respect. This willingness also reflects a basic but hardly smug Christian self-confidence. In any case, who would deny that the chain reaction to the critical comments of Monsignor John Tracy Ellis some five years ago has led to many advances in Catholic higher education?

CASTRO, CUBA AND THE U.S.

CUBA IS moving rapidly toward another crisis in which the U.S. is closely involved. It is fortunate that the recent declaration of attitude and intention released from the executive office outlines the future course of Cuban-U.S. relations with a clarity it has previously lacked.

Acknowledging U.S. "omissions and errors" during the terrible reign of Batista, the declaration asserts that Castro has betrayed the revolution to such an extent that his regime now represents a clear and present danger to the Americas. It pledges further to support future democratic governments in Cuba.

The government of the United States has thus announced a clear policy concerning the troubled and troubling situation in Cuba. As a public declaration that will be pondered in all Latin American countries it has great merit. It emphasizes our support for democratic governments and our opposition to dictatorial regimes, a position which cannot be too frequently repeated for Latin American consumption. Our past policies, after all, would not lead one unerringly to this conclusion.

Nevertheless the position of the United States in regard to Cuba is not an enviable one. It is neither possible nor desirable to ignore the travails of Cuba, but the extent to which the U.S. can aid anti-Castro forces is extremely delicate. If there had been a record of clear opposition to the Batista regime, the present Administration would have a reserve of trust and goodwill on which to draw. Unfortunately this does not exist and Castro can continue to exploit "Yankee" opposition as a counter-revolutionary threat. This is extremely important in a situation where the overthrow of Castro —if it is to succeed—depends not only upon the people now in Cuba but the Cuban army.

For this reason alone, the training of guerrillas at bases within this country is not an unalloyed good. It cannot fail to arouse uneasiness in Cubans who are still uncertain of the direction their country is taking, who are torn between conflicting loyalties and contradictory news reports. Nevertheless, until some clearer, better course is devised and until the situation within Cuba changes radically, our Government has little choice but to walk the present tightrope.

GENERAL WELFARE, PRIVATE GOOD

BECAUSE MOST of the recent debate about Federal aid to education has centered on the question of aid to parochial schools, the position of Negro spokesmen has been slighted if not completely overlooked. They are, however, of the utmost interest to those who are interested in the passage of the Administration's bill.

Speaking as executive secretary of the N.A.A.C.P., Roy Wilkins has said: "We state simply that Federal funds ought not to go to States which defy the Constitution and the Supreme Court. The contention that the Justice Department can follow up the appropriations and compel desegregation has never been documented." The N.A.A.C.P. thus stands opposed to the Administration bill unless it is amended. But—familiar words—if such an amendment is attached, the bill will surely fail.

The argumentation follows its familiar pattern. If you insist on this amendment, Negroes are told, the bill will fail and you will be sacrificing the "general good" for the good of a minority. To this Mr. Wilkins responds: "In this campaign the Negro and the N.A.A.C.P. are in the familiar role of being called upon for the ten millionth time to subordinate their acknowledged grievances to the 'larger' good. When the crisis is over, the supporters of the larger good treat the segregation issue as if it were smallpox."

Mr. Wilkins' position, even his edgy sharpness, is quite understandable. He can provide only too much documentation to bolster his case. If we disagree with his conclusion—for we would rather see the bill passed without amendments than not passed at all—we think he emphasizes what too many people are forgetting in the current debate: the argument from general welfare is sound, but what,

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in the long run, serves the general welfare is not always immediately evident. It should not be invoked too readily by those who are not called upon to submerge their own interests.

BLURRED IMAGE

WHO SPEAKS for the Republican Party? At the moment, the lack of any clear answer to this question is spreading concern and dissension in the ranks of the G.O.P.

Ex-President Eisenhower—now General Eisenhower, and in a sense a subordinate of the Democrat residing in the White House—will certainly not carry the burden of day-to-day pressure on the enemy to be met in 1964. Richard Nixon is temporarily lying low, although he promises soon to take up the command he held before the fateful election. Senator Barry Goldwater and Governor Nelson Rockefeller represent Republican postures so diverse that they almost cancel out, and at this early date neither can be expected to gain dominance in the party as a whole.

By default, then, the role of spokesman for the G.O.P. has gone to the Republican leadership in Congress—to the indestructible Senator Everett McKinley Dirksen and the rock-ribbed Rep. Charles A. Halleck, both Midwesterners, both arch-conservative, both regarded in Washington as immovable Congressional fixtures. These two have leaped into the breach with a weekly Gallagher and Shean kind of news conference, exchanging ponderous witticisms about President Kennedy's "vast do-good programs" and holding forth on the dangers of government spending.

A measure of the effectiveness of "Ev and Charlie," as they have come to be billed, is that their taped and televised performances have delighted Democrats as much as Old Guard Republicans, although for quite opposite reasons. Liberal Republicans, needless to say, are less happy at the identification of their party with antediluvianism, even in the form of a turn-of-the-century vaudeville act. Senator George D. Aiken of Vermont, for instance, is not amused at the negative image projected by "Ev and Charlie." He wants the duet enlarged to include more progressive voices.

Plans are afoot, we are told, to satisfy Mr. Aiken and the liberal Republicans he speaks for, but nobody has explained how this can be done. "Ev and Charlie" are not likely to yield their places gracefully, and none of the would-be candidates in 1964 may be expected to yield to the others. A G.O.P. choral group might be lively, but it doesn't seem likely to cure a problem of identity.

It's a rough one, all right, but as they're saying around the Capitol these days, "That's show biz!"

CIVIL WAR CELEBRATIONS

THE ESTABLISHMENT of a national Civil War Centennial Commission might have been a good idea—to nurture in our people a sense of tradition and identity, to provide an occasion for thinking through the tragic lessons of the war between brothers, to hasten the healing process of wounds which even today are causing the nation pain. But as the Centennial preparations become more and more elaborate, more insistent, more emotional, we begin to wonder about the wisdom of the whole idea.

The practice of racial discrimination at the forthcoming meeting of the Centennial Commission at Charleston, S.C., is an embarrassment and a stain on the entire conception of the Centennial. More than that, it is a sign that the passions and enmities of a century ago are in too many quarters as deeply and as bitterly held as ever. In more than one community in the South, there seems real danger that Centennial celebrations will become rituals of defiance and division, apologias for a way of life that pointedly includes segregation. Such a development would lead us all in precisely the wrong direction, of course, and would make the Centennial an occasion of national shame.

As for the fantastic flood of Civil War-iana that threatens to engulf us—flags, weapons, souvenirs of all types, books, magazines, phonograph records, copies of documents, parlor games—much of it is foolish, shoddy and vulgar, and for that reason a source of irritation rather than pride. The craze for the re-enactment of battles may signify nothing more than historical interest, but the expenditure of so much time, money and effort in fancy-dress ritual, complete with cannon and smoke, seems at best hard to understand and at worst an unhealthy fascination with the resistance to the death of last century's ideologues.

Perhaps we are too quick to worry. But we can't help agreeing with Rep. Don Magnuson of Washington. Commenting on still another aspect of the Centennial celebration, the pressure on Congress to purchase an additional five million dollars' worth of Civil War battle sites as national parks, Mr. Magnuson made this mild observation: "It strikes me that we may be overdoing this a little."

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WHEN BISHOPS SPEAK

DESPITE the passage of more than forty years, I suppose the most famous statement ever made by the American Bishops remains their 1919 pastoral letter. Issued in the days of the great Monsignor John A. Ryan, that statement has always been considered a landmark in the application of Christian principle to the social order. I wonder, though, if it aroused as much controversy among the general public as some of the more recent Bishops' statements.

It sometimes seems these days that every other television program is devoted to analysis and discussion of what the Bishops are saying or doing now. This is something of an exaggeration, of course, but it is not completely far-fetched. Non-Catholic Americans are undoubtedly a lot more conscious of our Bishops and their views than they used to be.

One reason for this, I suppose, can be found in the kind of statement the American Bishops have been issuing. Offhand, I remember statements from the Bishops on secularism in America, on the immorality of racial segregation, on Catholics and the Constitution, on birth control and foreign aid. These are matters of deep concern, not just to Catholics but to all Americans, and it is natural that the Bishops' statements should receive wide attention.

In addition to the general interest in the subjects the Bishops have been discussing, there is the changed position of Catholics themselves. Catholics in 1961 come much closer to being an accepted part of the American community than they were in 1919. Even in purely political terms, it is hard to ignore a group that adds up to more than forty million people, and this fact alone would make the statements of the American Bishops count for something.

Some people don't like this, of course. Secularists do not want to see religious principles applied to the everyday world. Some Protestants don't like Catholics to receive all that attention in the papers. There are even Catholics who get nervous about the very idea of such statements; they hate the controversies that often follow. I count myself in none of these categories; I am all in favor of the Bishops' speaking out. But when they do, I think there are difficulties which must be taken into account.

One major difficulty arises from the fact that the Catholic Church, despite the improved status of Catholicism, is still an object of fear and suspicion on the part of a considerable body of the American people. This fear is concentrated on the Pope, perhaps, but there is plenty left over for our own American Bishops, and to a lesser extent for priests and nuns.

I think we forget too easily that things a Catholic may take for granted are often sources of bafflement and uneasiness among others. This is true even about small things. In the case of the Bishops, for example, the formal titles with which we address them; the episcopal ring we kiss; the clothing they wear on ceremonial occasions—these things are foreign to the experience of most Americans and strike many as alien and strange. Inevitably, these somewhat superficial aspects of Catholic life tend to raise a wall between the Church and the average citizen, and this fact cannot fail to affect public reaction to statements by the hierarchy.

Perhaps there is no easy remedy for this problem. But there are things we can do to avoid making our problem worse. When the Bishops speak on matters that directly affect pending public policy, one big thing would be to recognize that the form, the manner of the statement is almost as important as its content.

On such occasions, it seems to me, Catholic statements should show a lively understanding of the nature of the society in which we live. It is the duty of the Bishops to speak out, to teach, to inform Christian consciences. After they have done so, however, the individuals to whom they speak must then proceed as citizens to make acts of practical judgment in the concrete political and social order. As I see it, these prudential decisions must be made by the citizen himself; the Bishops cannot make them for him, and it would be wrong to give the impression that they want to.

Now particularly, recognition of this point is crucial. Last fall's Puerto Rican pastoral letter was a disaster from all points of view. Why? Because, I think, it failed completely to take into account the nature of a modern democratic society and the proper role of the Christian citizen in such a society. And as a result of this failure, I think the procedure of the Puerto Rican Bishops will go down in history as a classic example of what not to do.

In the testimony before Congress on the current aid-to-education controversy, I was glad to see that Catholic spokesmen showed some care on this point. The representative of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, for example, made the Bishops' views quite clear; at the same time, he also made it quite plain that this was a matter on which each legislator, Catholic or non-Catholic, had to follow his own conscience and best judgment. This is, surely, as it should be; I don't see how there can be any argument on that point. And if this procedure is the general rule, no one can reasonably complain when the Bishops make their views known.

JAMES O'GARA.

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The Polish Caesar

Encroachment by the state upon God's domain threatens the present coexistence between Catholicism and Communism

by MATTHEW M. MESTROVIC

NEWS OF the growing Church-State breach in Poland fills the heart with foreboding. The accord between Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski and Wladislaw Gomulka was the cornerstone on which a new and happier Poland was built in the turbulent days of 1956, when the Polish nation seethed with desperate revolt. This new Poland was still a Poland firmly in the Soviet bloc, a Poland still ruled by the Communist Party. But it was also a Poland where man had shattered the chains of fear and could follow the dictates of his own conscience.

The chief concession Gomulka granted the Church in the 1956 accord was to permit religious education in schools. Henceforth Poles had the right of free men to educate their children in accordance with their conscientious beliefs. Every Polish parent had the right to have his children receive religious education in primary and secondary schools. The overwhelming majority of Polish parents availed themselves of this legal right, and by 1958 religion was taught in ninety-nine per cent of Poland's twenty-five thousand primary and secondary schools.

Now the government has withdrawn the permission to teach religion in public schools granted under the Church-State agreement. For years the government had attempted to eliminate religious education by inducing the parents, through moral and economic pressure, to withdraw their children from religion classes. Having failed to deprive the religion classes of their students, the government has now successfully deprived the students of their teachers. The government struck at the very heart of the 1956 accord with a law providing that all teachers in public schools must receive a permit from the authorities. Starting last fall, the government denied teaching permits to lay religion teachers. (Some years ago priests had been banned from teaching in public schools.)

Mr. Mestrovic, who teaches at Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey, visited Poland several months ago.

The suppression of religious education in schools is all the more ominous since in Poland the Church had proven its patriotism. In the grim and tragic days of World War II Catholic priests (including the then Father Stefan Wyszynski) were leaders in Poland's national liberation struggle against Nazism. After the Polish October, Cardinal Wyszynski supported Poland's firm membership in the Soviet bloc and aligned the Church with the Polish government in defending the nation's western regions against any attempt by Germany to repossess them. Although Cardinal Wyszynski did not give his blessing to the building of Communism in Poland, neither did he condemn the economic foundations of the Polish socialist state.

In a pastoral last fall, the Polish bishops rejected the concept that the Church was a foe of the Polish Communist state. Said the bishops, "We are not foes of the State, because as believing Christians we cannot be such. Indeed we proclaim the words of Christ: 'Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's' —but also 'and to God the things that are God's.' " On the other hand the hierarchy condemned the suppression of religious education in schools because, the bishops believe, this is an infringement by Caesar in God's domain. If the Church were to renounce its obligation to teach the Gospel to each new generation of men, would it not be denying Christ Himself? For at the very end, just before the Ascension, did not the Resurrected Christ admonish Saint Peter three times to "feed My sheep"?

THE STATE'S encroachment upon God's domain threatens the coexistence between Catholicism and Communism upon which the new Poland of 1956 was built. This coexistence assumes that the more than ninety per cent of Poland's people who are believers can be loyal citizens of the Communist state while remaining faithful to their God. The truce between Catholicism and Communism in Poland is not without

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precedent in the Church's two millenia of history. Such coexistence is possible because Christ's Church is a teacher of eternal verities, not the guardian of this or that political or economic system. In the Balkans, for instance, Christianity had lived and ultimately survived five hundred years of Turkish rule.

Coexistence means to exist side by side, however; it does not imply peace and harmony. The Polish Communist monthly *Mysl Wolna* knew this when it proclaimed openly, "Polish atheism must fight with the Catholic hierarchy for a great and important cause, for dominion over the soul of the whole nation." This relentless struggle has gone on after the Polish October, just as it had before, but with one essential difference. In their struggle "for the dominion over the soul of the whole nation" the Stalinists sought to destroy man's free spirit by annihilating the dissenter physically. In the twilight years of Polish Stalinism Cardinal Wyszynski and numerous other Catholic priests and laymen were under physical detention and Catholic opinion was effectively silenced except for the pro-Soviet Catholic organization PAX. After the Polish October carried Gomulka to power, the jails were emptied of political prisoners and independent publications such as *Znak* and *Tygodnik Powszechny* were permitted to express cautiously the Catholic point of view.

But despite an immense propaganda barrage, the Communists reaped a meager harvest from their labors. The atheists' intellectual paucity is best illustrated by their publication *Argumenty*. For lack of better arguments against religion, *Argumenty* is reprinting nineteenth century tracts castigating Catholic obscurantism and extolling Darwin's theory of evolution! More interesting than these dusty arguments in favor of Darwinism is the revelation (in the September 18, 1960 issue) of a poll *Argumenty* took among students in teachers' colleges in Katowice province. According to the atheist publication eighty-four per cent of the future teachers said they were believing and practicing Catholics, while barely over one per cent of those interviewed were "non-believers." A sad comment on *Argumenty's* own labors.

The government's propaganda arsenal contains, however, more up-to-date weapons than the rusty old cannon *Argumenty*. Recently the government film studios in Lodz produced a film called "Mother Joan of the Angels." This is the tale of a priest's efforts to exorcise demons from the souls of nuns in a seventeenth century Polish convent. The priest himself in the end succumbs to the demons and commits murder, and one of the nuns takes a lover. School children were taken to see this film by school authorities to convince them that this is what monastic orders are like in Poland. Poland's Cardinal Wyszynski called the film a "dirty glove flung in the face of the Church" and asserted it was part of a campaign to "free Poland's children from God." A Communist paper praised the film warmly, not unexpectedly, calling it a "protest against all remnants of religious fanaticism, demonology and mysticism."

NOW, HOWEVER, the government has raised a wholly new and insidious charge in its campaign to separate Poland's people from their historic faith. On March 18, Gomulka, the First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' (Communist) party, stated that the "main source of the various differences (between Church and State) emanates from the fact that the leaders of the Church, as citizens of the Polish state, remain physically in our country, but their souls and hearts belong to the Vatican."

"The Vatican for its political aims," Gomulka went on to say, "has great need of persecution and martyrdom of the Catholic Church, especially in Poland where these persecutions do not exist." As for the elimination of religious education from public schools, Gomulka said "no one can see in this a struggle of the State against the Church."

The substance of Gomulka's assertion was that the Polish Bishops are taking orders from the Vatican—a Vatican which some Poles suspect of pro-German bias, particularly during the pontificate of Pius XII. The scornful reference to the late Pope as "Il Tedesco" (the German) made by the Communist publication *Glos Pracy* (in the Jan. 19 issue) does not necessarily offend the sense of truth of all Polish believers. Nor does the Communist publication's allegation that the late Pope strove for "the supremacy of Germany in Europe and was condemning Poland to a state of backwardness" fall on wholly unreceptive ears in Poland.

Poles resent the alleged lethargy of the Holy See in redrawing the boundaries of the bishoprics in Western Poland (the area acquired by Poland from Germany at the end of World War II) to conform to Poland's new political boundaries. During Pope Pius' pontificate, the Holy See had granted Cardinal Wyszynski broad powers to appoint bishops in the western regions with practically all the powers of resident bishops. And the Polish bishops have gone on record in defense of Poland's western borders. But the Holy See has always been reluctant to make final diocesan boundaries before the political boundaries have been confirmed by international treaty. The blame for the long delay thus rests with the Great Powers whose discord has prevented the conclusion of a German peace treaty.

Cardinal Wyszynski rejected the charge that the Polish hierarchy was serving foreign interests. In a sermon in the church of the Visitation in Warsaw on March 19 he said, "By the will of God for thirteen years I have been conducting the affairs of the Church in the fatherland. During that time I had several con-

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versations with Pope Pius XII and have had three conversations with Pope John XXIII. Never has an attempt been made to give me any instructions whatsoever on how Polish bishops should conduct affairs in Poland."

Why then did Gomulka choose to breach the Church-State accord which had served Poland so well? Gomulka himself was able to wrest control of the government from the Stalinist old guard, and win a measure of independence for Poland within the Soviet bloc, precisely because of the massive support he received from the country's non-Communist masses. Some Poles I spoke to see Moscow's hand behind Gomulka's moves to roll back the influence of the Church. Serious disunity in Poland might give the Soviets a chance to strengthen their influence over Polish affairs.

Gomulka may sense the lurking danger from the East, for while pressing to subdue the Catholic Church he has also lashed out at PAX, the Catholic organization whose heart is in Moscow. Gomulka told PAX leader Boleslaw Piasecki that henceforth the organization would be stripped of special privileges which reportedly netted about 100,000,000 *zlotys* a year. Sacrificing PAX, which opposed Gomulka's return to power in 1956, may be the pound of flesh Moscow is paying for the crackdown on religious instruction and the imposition of new and heavy taxes on church revenues, including church collections. It is true that Gomulka apparently offered to increase PAX representation in the Polish *Sejm* (parliament) from one to four deputies in the April 16 national elections, but 100,000 *zlotys* per year is a high price to pay for three additional seats in parliament.

THE PUBLIC airing of the Church-State differences on the eve of national elections may have been forced upon Gomulka against his will. Apparently, the Church hierarchy, having exhausted all possibilities to adjust the differences with the government in private discussions, decided that this was the best time to submit the dispute to the court of public opinion. Surely the government need not fear that the single slate of government approved candidates for the new *Sejm* will go down to defeat. But the Polish electorate has certain possibilities to express its disenchantment with the recent turn in Polish affairs. Massive abstentionism would constitute a vote of no confidence in the government.

In most Polish electoral districts the officially approved list of candidates includes more names than there are seats to fill. Presumably the candidates at the head of the list are most favored by the government, while those at the bottom, although still within the fold, are persons of lesser standing. Crossing out the names at the top of the list and electing the candidates of lesser official standing would be another way the voters could show their dissatisfaction.

Reports from Poland indicate widespread indifference towards the elections. In Warsaw, for instance, at the end of a two-week verification period, only fifty-five per cent of the voters had troubled to check their names on the voter rolls. (In Poland only those persons whose names are correctly entered on the rolls may cast their ballots.) The current apathy stands in sharp contrast to the massive interest in the elections of 1957 when Cardinal Wyszynski himself voted for the official slate and urged all Poles to do likewise. This year the Cardinal has remained silent with regard to the elections.

Some Poles feel that the current conflict is bound to spread until it mushrooms into a drive to uproot Christianity in Poland, with ensuing massive arrests of priests and Catholic laymen, the suppression of Catholic publications, and a return to the dark repression of Stalin's declining years. Other Poles feel that, for the time being at least, Gomulka's drive against the Church his limited objectives and will abate with the final stamping out of religious education in schools. This suppression of religious education Gomulka characterized not as an aggressive drive against the Church, but only a step forward in the "building of socialism."

Those Poles inclined to a more hopeful view of things feel that after the April 16 election another "accord" will be reached between the Catholic hierarchy and the nation's Communist leaders, an accord which will of necessity recognize as final the elimination of religious instruction from schools but will "guarantee" other rights of Poland's Catholics. That such an agreement may be Gomulka's aim is indicated by the government's reluctance to assail Cardinal Wyszynski personally. Furthermore, some Communist leaders have hinted at the government's willingness to help Catholics set up religious instruction outside the school system.

Cardinal Wyszynski is girding for the oncoming storm by tightening discipline within the clergy. Last month he forced the disbanding of the Circle of Priests, a pro-government organization of about four hundred "progressive" priests. At the same time the Cardinal has called on the Polish people to rally to the Church as they have done time and time again in adversity.

And what will tomorrow bring? Must Christianity in Poland after a thousand years resign itself to a slow, inevitable decline before the onward march of Communism? "The situation is serious," said Cardinal Wyszynski in a sermon, "but a Catholic never loses hope"—hope, may we add, in the final victory of good over evil. This great hope rests in man's own dauntless spirit. For as Cardinal Wyszynski put it, "The spirit of man is an eternal rebel—rebelling against all slavery and falsehoods."

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St. Patrick's Day, 1961

by DAVID LOWE

THE FIRST signs appeared weeks before the day itself. Tiffany's advertised a "Salute to St. Patrick's Day," an Irish coffee glass of "hand-blown crystal, with a shamrock motif." McCutcheon's —perhaps the best linen shop in New York—offered tea towels with the heraldic arms and shields of the provinces, cities, boroughs and towns of Ireland. On Park Avenue, the elegant Charles Dillon's displayed quietly handsome green ties.

How different all this was from the nativist riots in Brooklyn in the 1840's and 50's, when New Yorkers were being panicked by the flood of fifty thousand more poor Irish every year, and the Brooklyn *Eagle* printed the police records in its columns to show that the Irish were the chief troublemakers in the city. (And so they were.) It was hard to believe on St. Patrick's Day, 1961 that Archbishop Hughes only a century before had had to ask the New York papers to print notices warning Irish Catholics to avoid the crowds drawn by the street preachers who ranted against them, and that Irish papers were calling the United States "a social hell" and suggesting that Irishmen emigrate almost any place else.

On St. Patrick's Day this year, the question a nativist speaker would have had to answer was, "Who are the natives?" In New York especially, a city whose political life is laced through with Irish names, the answer would have to be dramatically different from that of a hundred years ago. And ultimately it would have to take into account the fact that John Fitzgerald Kennedy is in the White House.

This was the great fact of last St. Patrick's Day, the great truth. Though it was seldom expressed, the special meaning of the day was bound up with the realization that an Irishman and a Catholic was in the office denied Al Smith. "Al must be smiling today," a Third Avenue bartender had said the day after the election, and it was this that made St. Patrick's Day 1961 different from all those before it.

Watching the school children, the members of the Irish societies, the bands parading up Fifth Avenue, looking at the prosperous faces, it was evident that few would remember—or want to be reminded of—the the fact that one of the reasons that first big St. Patrick's Day parade had been held in Boston in 1841 was because, unlike the Scots or Germans and the other national groups who celebrated their special festivals with a dinner, too many Irishmen didn't have the price of a dinner. Looking at the marchers and the thousands of spectators who wore green, there was little evidence of the fact Oscar Handlin has pointed out—that the Irish were the poorest and the least directed of all the immigrants who arrived here. There was no evidence of the census finding of 1850, which showed that the Irish formed the bulk of the unclassified laborers in our Eastern cities, that sixty-five per cent were in occupations of the lowest skills—a higher ratio than for any other group. Certainly there was no indication among these Irish-Americans in 1961 that in 1860 Walt Whitman had said that even the free Negroes in the North had more chance for advancement than the new Irish arrivals. For if there was a look of prosperity on their faces, there was also a prosperity of spirit in their manner.

ONE CAN ONLY speculate upon the effect on Irish-American attitudes if Kennedy had been defeated. The reaction to a resounding "no" to a Catholic in the Presidency would have been deep among all Catholics, of course, but most particularly among the Irish. For the reason St. Patrick's Day is the one national patron saint's day to be widely celebrated in this country is because the Irish felt themselves so little at home, in the Protestant world they found on these shores. Defiantly, out of hurt and poverty and rejection, they set out to make their saint's day an annual rally for their own values in the midst of an alien culture.

As sociologists point out, pressure and discrimination bring three types of response: avoidance, acceptance and aggression. The Irish made the first and last response, with a vengeance, before they came to the second. If the Yankees put up "Protestants only need apply" signs and industrialists called them "the guana that makes the railroads grow," the Irish showed they could respond in kind. If the Yankees rejected them and their faith, they could reject all the Yankees stood for—and, in time, threaten it.

Unfortunately, the Yankees stood for certain good values, and Irish opposition to these things could only

Mr. Lowe is a journalist who lives and works in New York. This is his first appearance in The Commonweal.

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hurt themselves. For instance, while the Catholic Germans were becoming Republicans because they hated slavery, the Irish-dominated Boston *Pilot* was anti-abolitionist, partly because the Yankees were abolitionists but also due to a deep conservatism. And while Catholic Italians in this country were raising money to fight reactionary Austrian oppression, the *Pilot* was demanding the banning of Shakespeare in Boston because he "befouled the stage with every abomination." It is only fair to say that one of the reasons for the founding of the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner—the Know-Nothings—was to defend liberal movements such as that for the abolition of slavery against Irish attack.

Thus, if John Fitzgerald Kennedy had been rejected, like Al Smith, the reaction among the Irish to "a second slap in the face" might have been severe—and dangerous. St. Patrick's Day, 1961 might have been a much more vigorous, and tragically bitter, affair.

But as the marchers passed, this March 17th, as one got the tone of the day, it was clear that, as it does for a nation from time to time in history, the "right" thing had happened for the course of America last November. And because of it, it was all at once far more important that a thousand lawyers of Irish extraction should be meeting in Chicago to form a Celtic Legal Society than that hard times in Boston should be memorialized. Even in Ireland itself, with an Irishman presiding at the United Nations and another Irishman commanding the troops in the Congo, it was far more meaningful that Cardinal D'Alton had suggested Irish re-entry into the Commonwealth than that the marchers should still be waving "England Get Out Of Ireland" banners.

On this St. Patrick's Day the Irish were accepted, but also, and finally more important, they themselves would have to accept America. The old role of suspicion and isolation, of opposition to much of the mainstream of American life, will at long last have to be finished.

This is good, for the old role was cruelly wasteful of talent and of opportunity. As Arnold and Caroline Rose observe in their study of immigrant groups, *America Divided*: "Group identification . . . may create foolhardiness and a tendency to martyrdom without securing the gain that risk-taking can secure. It creates a group pride that may become satisfied with mediocrity. It frequently promotes chauvinism and nationalism, which voluntarily separates the group from the broader opportunities and contacts that it presumably is fighting to secure."

Ghettos—whether physical or of the spirit—are the easiest way of preserving old traditions, of course, but they are also the most costly way. The problem now will be to select those values which the Irish have preserved and which America needs. Among these, as all America knows, are abundant imagination, wit and the power to appreciate matters of the spirit. We can expect the old, simple Irish patriotism of other St. Patrick's Days, with all its blarney and malarkey, to fade—and perhaps even the parade too—as the new generation no longer needs to vaunt Irish values so openly. It will gradually become clear that it is closed season forever on the gray-haired mother sitting at her cabin door in the Celtic twilight. For this St. Patrick's Day the President of the United States got his family coat of arms from the Irish Ambassador, and surely things will never be the same.

THAT WAS A BLUE DEEP TOWN

That was a blue deep town when the evening curved
Sad and melting on the Berkshires to the west.
Time went forward and back with the rockers on
the porch;
I listened to my aunts and uncles on the porch.
Time died into their voices as they talked,
Thirty years of town scattered among their stories.

Blue to the woods beyond the dike, to the river
Blue and deepening, but why was it so sad?
The hearses were so gentle in those streets.
Looking into the trees you could not tell time,
And yet the seasons never came but grew like plants,
And from the houses grew, in their wistful wood.

I never remembered the hot song of its noons
Or the hungry hummingbird suspended in the
hollyhock.
That town was porches and in the evening talk,
And a child who heard it two rooms back
And stopped between two windows just at the clap
of dark.
Why is my only image a face alive with tears?

JOSEPH ENGLISH.

WE WALK TO ST. PAUL'S

On Cambridge Sunday mornings, I grow grand,
Cathedral-tall, with gothic grace and gravity.
Cufflinked and gartered are my buttresses,
And granite-gray and vested, my façade.
Köln, Chatres, and I comport alike
(Con majesto, with organs echoing).
We Temples are, and like it passing well.

JOHN C. CORRIGAN, JR.

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Variations on a Theme

by SISTER HELEN JAMES JOHN

THE TERM existentialist has been so bandied about in recent years that it becomes increasingly difficult to say what it means; more and more it seems like a clear-cut example of the nominalist description of a universal, "a word used as a handy expression to designate a group of individuals who have nothing whatsoever in common." From Kierkegaard and Nietzsche to Marcel and Sartre, the existentialists have been a fiercely and vociferously mixed lot. There is not one who has not vigorously objected at being put in the same class with the others.

It may, therefore, seem singularly bold, or singularly foolish, to introduce any kind of a defining characteristic, but I will hazard it: the existentialists are philosophers who start out, not from a principle of universal validity, or even from a primordial experience, but from a choice. Each is, in his own unique way, a thinker who sees human freedom as both the central problem and the vital source in the quest for wisdom. And it is this common starting point, perhaps, which best explains the very diversity of the existentialists; the freedom of the philosophers is manifested in the variety of philosophies.

At the same time, this common emphasis upon freedom leads the existentialists to devote themselves primarily to an exploration of the human situation in the concrete; they have thus devoted their attention to a whole range of themes often neglected in more abstract and systematic philosophies. And of these themes, perhaps none is more revealing than that of *other people*. Here existentialism appears in its full force as protest against the "dehumanizing" of man—a protest which gathers force from the whole context of twentieth-century Europe, from the atrocities of the concentration camps and the perfecting of brainwashing techniques to the systematized reduction of man to his "functions" carried out in the pursuit of a "higher standard of living."

PERHAPS no other theme would illustrate so well the consequences of the thinker's initial choice, the projection of his freedom into the profound reality of the sharing of human existence. This emerges with some force from an examination of this theme as it is treated by three very different existentialists, Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Buber, and Gabriel Marcel.

In Sartre, we have certainly the most notorious of the existentialists—it was he who was chiefly responsible for its emerging as a kind of intellectual fad in France just after the second world war. The choice which determines the course of his thought has been erected into his own definition of existentialism—"nothing else but an attempt to draw the full conclusions from a consistently atheistic position." From the rejection of God, Sartre proceeds directly to the rejection of any objective values in human life. In a lecture often considered as a kind of existentialist manifesto *(Existentialism and Humanism,* 1946), Sartre sums it up this way:

"The existentialist . . . finds it extremely embarrassing that God does not exist, for there disappears with him all possibility of finding values in an intelligible heaven. . . . Everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist, and man is in consequence forlorn, for he cannot find anything to depend upon, either within or outside himself. . . . For if indeed existence precedes essence, one will never be able to explain one's action by reference to a given and specific human nature; in other words, there is no determinism—man is free, man *is* freedom. Nor, on the other hand, if God does not exist, are we provided with any values or commands that could legitimize our behavior."

This rejection of God, and with God, of any objective values outside himself, brings Sartre to the one principle of his morality: ". . . freedom can have no other end and aim but itself; and when once a man has seen that values depend upon himself, in that state of forsakenness he can will only one thing, and that is freedom as the foundation of all values." Elsewhere, Sartre develops this theme in terms which Marcel has aptly characterized as the total denial of grace of even the most secular sort: "For a human being, to be is to choose himself; nothing comes to him either from without or from within himself that he can receive or accept." Reality-in-itself, the world of objects, is simply absurd, meaningless, obscene; only being-for-itself, by the absolutizing of its own freedom, can give meaning to human existence. This gives us the general context

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for Sartre's study of human relations; perhaps its general atmosphere would be most concisely expressed in one of Sartre's most oft-quoted lines: "Hell is other people."

In this context, it is not surprising that the other person is always thought of in the third person; he is never directly addressed, but remains *autrui,* "the other," the intruder upon my sphere of consciousness. Sartre takes as his starting point the situation of the man surprised by the stare of a stranger while he himself is in the act of peeking through a keyhole. In fact, he lays such emphasis upon this experience that he makes it serve even as a genetic explanation of the idea of God, who becomes simply the projection-to-the-limit of "that immediate and burning presence of the stare of Another, which has often filled us with shame." He is thus conceived as "the omnipresent and infinite subject *for whom* I exist"—that is, in Sartre's thought, whose gaze makes me, no longer a subject in my own right, the creator of my own world, but a mere object for Him, a thing. God—and here Sartre seems to regard Him as simply the Platonic Idea of *the other*—is then the cold, unabashed onlooker, the Unstared-at Starer, whose very look reduces me to the level of being-in-itself, disgusting in the "obscene" meaningless superfluity of its existence.

The only escape from this reduction-to-absurdity implied in all being-for-another, Sartre finds in love; but love as he sees it looks very queer indeed. It becomes, in fact, an ill-disguised form of hate, the effort of one human being to enslave the liberty of another, to see himself in the other's eyes no longer as a mere object, but as the absolute value. Thus the rejection of God brings Sartre to the rejection of genuine personal relationships, a rejection which finds such grim expression in the words which introduce us to his chapter on Love in *l'Etre et le Néant:* "All that holds good for me holds for the other. While I try to free myself from his grip, he tries to free himself from mine; while I seek to enslave him, he seeks to enslave me. . . . The descriptions which follow, then (under the rubric, "Love, Language and Masochism") should be envisaged in the perspective of *conflict.* Conflict is the original meaning of being for another."

SARTRE thus goes from a rejection of God to the absolutizing of the self, and from there to an attitude in which the other person appears only as a threat to one's own value, the opponent in conflict or the *thing* which must be dominated. In radical contrast, the thought of Martin Buber goes from the encounter with the living God—the God of Abraham and of Isaac—to the life of dialogue, of *lived* relation with his fellow man. Buber recognizes of course, the possibility, at times the necessity, of treating the other as *him* (which is, practically, to neglect his personal character); but the central theme of his thought is given in the title of his fundamental book, *I and Thou.* It is this theme which gives unity to the five shorter works published under the title *Between Man and Man.*

What comes first for Buber is the "turning" to God, who speaks to man in all the events of life. Here all else is caught up into the lived relation to God. The decision, or more exactly the response, which is central to his thought as to his life is described in the following terms: "To step into pure relation is not to disregard everything, but to see everything in the Thou, not to renounce the world but to establish it on its true basis." And he tells us, in a single moving paragraph, the story of his realization that this vital relation with God could not be isolated from the life of genuine communion with his fellow man.

"What happened was no more than that one forenoon, after a morning of 'religious' enthusiasm, I had a visit from an unknown young man, without being there in spirit. I certainly did not fail to be friendly . . . I conversed attentively and openly with him—only I omitted to guess the questions which he did not put. Later, not long after, I learned from one of his friends —he himself was no longer alive—the essential content of these questions; I learned that he had come to me not casually, but borne by destiny, not for a chat but for a decision. He had come to me, he had come in this hour. What do we expect when we are in despair and yet go to a man? Surely a presence by means of which we are told that nevertheless there is meaning."

Since then, he adds, "I have given up the 'religious' . . . I possess nothing but the everyday . . . each mortal hour's fulness of claim and responsibility . . . yet I . . . know who speaks and demands a response." And so clear is his own awareness of the call of God in the life with others that he sees this very call as a kind of proof of God's existence. "A man can ward off with all his strength the belief that God is there, and he tastes him in the strict sacrament of dialogue."

The life of dialogue is thus precisely what Sartre's contact with the other is not. There is a passage where Buber speaks of an attitude in which a man refuses to accept the other as he really is, preferring to regard him as merely a part of his own experience. Sartre's analysis of being-for-another could hardly be better defined; and Buber characterizes it as a rejection of real life which leads to the disintegration of all human reality.

In contrast, what the life of dialogue demands is an openness to the other in his whole being: "Only he who himself turns to the other human being and opens himself to him receives the world in him. Only the being whose otherness, accepted by my being, lives and faces me in the whole compression of existence, brings the radiance of eternity to me." Where Sartre sees human love as the effort of each to enslave the

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other, to take possession of his freedom, Buber sees the lover as "turning to" the beloved precisely in his otherness, his independence, his self-reality; far from attempting to assimilate into his own soul the living reality to whom he turns, he pledges himself to the other person.

Furthermore, the lived relation of I and Thou is not to be sought only in rare and sublime moments, it is meant to permeate the whole of life, even our contact with inanimate reality, even the everyday world of work and technique and organization. This is a point upon which Buber insists—the role of personal recognition and understanding among men who work on the same assembly line or at adjoining desks, the awareness of the "organization man" that those for whom he plans are not mere numbers with human masks, but persons.

BUBER passes from the Absolute Thou to the life of dialogue. Gabriel Marcel, brought up in an atmosphere of agnosticism, had to follow an opposite route. His path led rather from the experience of participation in the mystery of being—as revealed in human love, hope and fidelity—to the encounter with the Absolute Thou who is the absolute ground of our hope.

At the sources of Marcel's thought is a vigorous protest against those attitudes, whether in technology or in idealistic philosophy, which reduce man to a mere abstraction or to a useful cog in the wheels of civilization. The radical choice in his thought centers upon the response to the presence of *being,* above all the personal being of the human *thou.* Perhaps the most fundamental distinction in his thought is that which marks the contrast between this attention to the presence of being and the act by which we grasp a mere object of thought.

As he has said "A presence can only be received [like a guest—the French word is *accueillir*] or rejected: I turn to you, not at all to take possession of you, but to open myself to you, to receive what you will to give me of yourself, to give what you would receive of me." An object cannot be received in this way. "I can only *take* it (or leave it there). Capture aims at a prey; *receiving* turns towards a guest—it is essentially a welcoming."

This means that the attitude of man in the face of reality must be one of openness, of acceptance. To this attitude Marcel gives the untranslatable name of *disponibilité.* It is disponibility which gives a man the capacity for really *being-with* others, at their disposal; it demands a kind of transparence of mind and heart which is found completely only in the saints. And it is this attitude which lights up the very vivid contrast between Sartre's view of freedom and Marcel's. Sartre's hero chooses—always and only—his own freedom; Marcel presents us with a very different ideal. ". . . the soul which is at the disposal of others is consecrated and inwardly dedicated; it is protected against suicide and despair because it knows that it is not its own, and that the most legitimate use it can make of its own freedom is precisely to recognize that it does not belong to itself; this recognition is the starting-point of its activity and creativeness."

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that where Sartre finds absurdity in the world and conflict at the root of all personal relationships, Marcel sees the notions of person, commitment, communion, and reality as intimately interrelated: the person discovers himself only in the loving affirmation of the personal value of others. And love—which Sartre described as a mutual effort of enslavement—appears to Marcel precisely as the effort of the lover to "collaborate" in the liberty of the beloved, to help him to become more truly free.

And Marcel protests with the fullest force of his thought against Sartre's self-contained and self-seeking view of man: ". . . when a man has truly given himself, whether he be artist, hero or saint, a light comes forth from him and shines in his act, in his example, in his work. . . . To define the being of man in such a way as to exclude the possibility of conceiving this light or this splendor, would be directly to propose a false definition, incapable of dealing with the truly essential evidence of the case."

It is this insistence on the genuine value and meaning of our relations with other people that leads Marcel to the recognition of God: the fidelity which I vow to another human being of its very nature demands an absolute strength to sustain it across the changes of human life, in the face of my own weakness. Perhaps the fundamental character of the whole experience of human love is nowhere better expressed than in a single line from one of Marcel's plays: "To love another is to say to him, Thou, thou shalt not die." It is the hope inextricably bound up with the fragile reality which is human love which Marcel sees as demanding for its fulfillment, at the heart of all being, a Will which is somehow "in connivance with me" insofar as my love and my fidelity truly deserve the name.

If the existentialists begin their philosophy, not with a principle, but with a decision, the paths can be radically different. For Sartre, the rejection of God leads to the choice of one's own freedom in the loss of genuine communion with others; for Buber, the free response to the call of God leads to the deep and direct relation of I to Thou, lived in the life of dialogue; for Marcel, the readiness to accept the full reality of other human beings, to *be with* them in the strongest sense of the word, leads to the encounter with the Absolute Thou who is the final ground of man's fidelity and man's hope.

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THE SCREEN

APRIL SHOWERS

PERHAPS the fair-to-middling movies that are turning up this spring are only the leftovers of our winter of discontent. In any case, the April fare is pretty skimpy; and here's a quick rundown of what's on our screens, pictures that aren't likely to make you want to drop everything and run to your downtown or local theater, even though they are a touch better than the mediocrity that passes as T.V. entertainment.

Parrish, produced, directed and written by Delmer Daves from the novel about Connecticut tobacco growers by Mildred Savage, is another of those lengthy movies that mix family relationships, sex and industry in the manner of *Ice Palace, A Summer Place* and *Cash McCall.* This one has some fine shots of Connecticut's tobacco country and playgrounds, and a good cast who really try to make the story palatable. There are Claudette Colbert and her son, Troy Donahue; tobacco-grower Dean Jagger and his pretty-but-naughty daughter, Diane McBain; a Simon Legree tobacco tycoon, Karl Malden, and his unfortunate sons and pretty-but-good daughter, Sharon Hugueny. But the story stretches on and on without ever developing the characters with any depth. The picture never makes clear why fairly intelligent and beautifully gowned Claudette marries unscrupulous and dictatorial Malden or why all the women, including a pregnant tobacco hand (Connie Stevens), find Troy irresistible; but it does prove that tobacco is a pretty precarious business, not only for the plants but also for the people involved: "If the worms don't get you, the fungus will."

The Green Helmet, an English movie about auto racing, has some excellent shots of racing in Italy, France and England, shots taken from the tracks and sometimes from the cars so as to place the spectator in the driver's seat and give him a maximum of thrills. The trouble with the picture is that the leading character, played by Bill Travers, is not a particularly admirable person, and his problems and anxieties with his boss (Ed Begley) and his daughter (Nancy Walters) become uninteresting. Furthermore, pictures about auto racing, like pictures about airplanes, have a certain sameness that palls after the first half hour. The emotional drama picks up, however, when the film concerns itself with the women who watch and wait (Miss Walters, Ursula Jeans, Megs Jenkins), and, needless to say, there's plenty of excitement for both the men and women involved when the camera concentrates on Italy's perilous Mille Miglia.

The Secret Ways, most of which was handsomely photographed in black and white in and around Vienna, starts out promisingly like another *Third Man,* but before it gets very far, it begins to repeat itself and has too much of everything—the intrigue, chases and even the beatings and tortures. Richard Widmark, who produced and had his finger in the direction with Phil Karlson, is amusing and effective as the secret agent hired to go into Hungary and rescue an anti-Communist leader (Walter Rilla). Joined in Vienna by this man's attractive daughter (Sonja Ziemann), Widmark has quite an exciting time as pursuer and the pursued, but after a while, the complicated plot, which stems from Alistair MacLean's novel, runs down; then the good cast and authentic backgrounds become merely props in an over-ripe politics-and-chase thriller.

Cry for Happy is a pathetically feeble comedy about four U.S. Navy men (Glenn Ford, Donald O'Connor, James Shigeta, Chet Douglas) who take over a Geisha house while on leave in Kyoto, Japan, and pretend it is an orphanage they are running for Japanese kids. The girls in the house (Miiko Taka, Miyoshi Umeki, Michi Kobi, Tsuruko Kobayashi) are extremely attractive, but the jokes about what Geisha girls do and do not do are routine and in bad taste; and the situations, involving youngsters, reporters and Navy personnel, are padded and tiresome. The wonder is not that the Navy and Department of Defense cooperated in the making of this sleazy picture but that the Navy is so pleased with the finished product that it is using photographs from the ill-considered film in recruiting stations. *Cry for Happy* would be a good reason for joining the Army or Marines.

All in a Night's Work, which employs the talents of Dean Martin as a playboy who inherits a publishing empire, Shirley MacLaine as a researcher who's suspected for no legitimate reasons of blackmail, Cliff Robertson as a veterinarian in love with Shirley, Charlie Ruggles as his father, Mabel Albertson as his prim mother, and of various other able actors, has some very funny moments. But its story of misunderstood motives is very thin and the bounce peters out long before Shirley discards Cliff for Dean. The comedy isn't quite as amusing on the whole as producer Hal Wallis and director Joseph Anthony thought.

Dondi, stemming from the comic strip of the same name, is about a little kid who attaches himself to five G.I.'s at a U.S. Army Meteorological Station. The boy, played by David Kory, in producer-director Albert Zugsmith's picture, is so saccharinely cute that adults in the audience will be embarrassed before the film's half over. But when Dondi follows his buddies to New York and gets lost in the big city, the picture's old-fashioned and contrived humor gets still more exaggerated, and even the kiddies may get restless. I'm not sure for whom *Dondi* was made, but a sequel is already in preparation—so somebody must be sold on it.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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An Exchange of Views

"Federal Aid to Education"

Waterford, Conn.

TO THE EDITORS: I have been a reader of The Commonweal's editorials for nearly fifteen years and have never until now felt the need of voicing a dissenting opinion.

Your editorial of March 24, 1961 enumerates matters for prolonged discussion and debate, but urges that this debate should not block passage of the present education bill. You call upon Catholics to make this "concession" in the interest of the general good.

Is it not a more reasonable position that the "general good" in any matter of legislation is not established until *after* Congressional hearings, debate and passage of a bill? The very purpose of hearings is to establish what in fact is the general good, after testimony from all concerned. There is provided a mechanism for turning the opposition of any group to support. This mechanism is amendment, or compromise. After all factions have presented arguments, some wording is found which does meet the approval of the majority of representatives, and this becomes the law of the land.

To call upon any group to support any bill which deprives them of sincerely felt rights smacks of a doctrinaire attitude unworthy of The Commonweal.

I am communicating my opposition to the present bill in letters to those Senators and the Representative I have elected to represent my interests. Perhaps as a result of the hearings and letters from those who feel as I do an amended bill will result, which will deserve support. It would seem that The Commonweal should be exerting its influence in favor of this amended bill.

ARTHUR P. VAUTRAIN.

Park Ridge, N. J.

TO THE EDITORS: Your embarrassment over the bishops' statement on aid to education [Mar. 17] is both evident and understandable. Within the space of eight months, the hierarchy has put the liberal image of the Church in jeopardy: first, with the Puerto Rican vote affair; now, with the tactics of the bishops' four points.

While I am quite prepared to concede the Constitutional complexity of the issue, I am appalled at your continued inability to perceive what it is about this, and other examples of Church pressure, that disturbs non-Catholics like myself. There are two main factors, it seems to me, that stimulate this disquiet:

First is the growing, self-imposed segregation of Catholic families into communities-within-communities, a sort of "apartheid in reverse." This is proving to be an increasingly disruptive factor in such municipal affairs as public school bond issues, public libraries, welfare agency work, charity drives, and even Boy Scout troops. In many of these cases, a growing number of Catholic families tend to shrink away (usually on the grounds of equivalent or superior activities "within the Church"). It is pointless for the non-Catholic to worry over this rejection; as your writeup implies, he has been guilty of this kind of personal affront himself for years. My concern here is over the damage done to institutions that have a glorious past as *public* institutions. Do not Catholics as well as non-Catholics have a responsibility to see that they endure and grow?

The second element of disquiet is the increasing use of pressure tactics, as exemplified by the bishops' fourth point to oppose the education bill unless their will prevails. Now, each man's religious views are his own affair. But when special privilege is sought in the name of religion, then religious intolerance is sure to make its ugly presence felt. This has been the history of aid-to-education battles in many European countries, notably France and Belgium. It seems to me that, in exchange for the rights of citizenship, each one of us has to make some sort of "social contract" in favor of the public good. This is difficult for some hard-pressed groups—voteless Negroes in the South, for example—to live with. Cannot the Church, however, find a way to fulfill its needs without adding itself to the growing number of pressure groups that are turning our democracy into a jungle?

You have written eloquently in the past about the growing dialogue between the Catholic faith and other Christian faiths. It seems to me that such a rapport will remain illusory until a serious attempt is made to confront everyday problems that drive the two groups apart. Perhaps a good way to start would be a frank examination in your pages of problems deriving from Catholic action, such as those mentioned in this letter.

FORD PARK.

Berlin, N. J.

TO THE EDITORS: Your editorial on the aid-to-education debate [Mar. 24] was pacifying. I must, however, disagree with your recommendation "that the present education bill deserves all the support

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it can muster" for the sake of "the general welfare of the country." I disagree because I believe the Kennedy program does not promote the general welfare. It promotes only the welfare of the majority and pointedly neglects the welfare of a sizable minority. The general welfare is not a magical numerical peak labelled fifty-one per cent or higher. It is the good of all, the common good. It cannot be realized if minority rights are rejected.

It would seem that a distinction must be made between minority interests and minority rights. The former involves benefits that are worthwhile and useful but arbitrary; the latter concerns basic needs and fundamental aspirations. In the context of the common good, a minority's interests may be discarded but not its rights. Is not that, after all, the function of democratic government: to favor the majority without crushing the rights of the minority? Surely, as Maritain maintained, the common good "under pain of being itself denatured, implies and demands the recognition of the fundamental rights of the person and the rights of the family." If this were not so, then we would have to censure the Negroes in New Orleans since their integration efforts have resulted in the crippling of the schools there. Likewise, if the Kennedy school aid bill collapses because of the opposition of Catholic citizens, the blame will not be ours but those who refused our rights, rights that are woven into the general welfare of a country.

What is at stake in the current school controversy is more than an equitable distribution of Federal resources. The root issue is the free exercise of the family right to educate the offspring. But the burdens of double support are tending to immobilize that right. To protect that right, double support must be set aside gradually and persistently. I believe the time to do this is now, not after the Administration's program has passed unopposed. For then there will be the precedent against granting us relief from double support. It will be an implicit admission that our parochial schools have no bearing on the general welfare. Whereas, I believe, they cannot be dissociated from it at all. It is not good that one school system should die in order that the public school system can live more abundantly. *(Rev.)* S. J. ADAMO.

Detroit, Mich.

TO THE EDITORS: As a Catholic, I am profoundly disturbed over the pressure being put on President Kennedy and on Congress to give some form of subsidy to parochial schools. The people who are pushing this are well-meaning, but they don't realize that by demanding public money for their hard-pressed school system they are riding roughshod over the desires of their fellow citizens and fellow taxpayers.

No matter how we Catholics cry that our children are discriminated against, the facts remain. One: A single, nonsectarian public school system exists for our children and everyone else's. Undermining of religion is not permitted in these schools; indeed many Catholics teach in them. Two: If we do not *choose* to take advantage of this school system, we cannot expect the country to provide a special system of schools for our Church or to underwrite such a system in anyway. Such preferential treatment runs counter to the Constitution. It cannot be denied that of all the religions, Catholics would get the most money from the federal government if such a bill as that proposed were passed. Three: The main purpose of a Catholic school is the formation of a devout Catholic; all else is necessarily secondary. Can we reasonably ask Protestants and Jews to contribute one penny of their money to institutions proudly committed to a purely religious, and only secondarily educational, ideal? I could not ask a fellow-citizen so to violate his conscience and I am ashamed that my fellow Catholics would be willing to do so, just for the sake of more money in the bank.

Monsignor McManus of Chicago uses the weapon of precedent adroitly when he says that loans are already being given to Catholic colleges, and why should we not extend this to all Catholic schools? "Give an inch and they will take a yard." His own line of logic convicts him of using a small concession to force larger ones. Next, after (God forbid) a bill is passed allowing loans, we will hear the cry, "What is different about a grant? You allow loans and the principle is the same." So give us out-and-out cash gifts, for the precedent is there. The danger is obvious. The only answer is to stand up as Catholics and say "no" to greed and "yes" to the Constitution.

(Mrs.) DAVID M. ROGERS.

West Islip, N. Y.

TO THE EDITORS: I was disappointed in your editorial on the aid to education question. . . . The improved climate in which the parochial school functions today has its own importance and has been won by patience, self-criticism and an effort of understanding. I do not believe the thinking of either clergy and laity living in what amount to Catholic enclaves appreciates that fact. Nor have they assessed their chances of getting aid by counting their mere vote-getting strength. It seems to me the climate in which any aid is given is as important as the aid, and I am inclined to the view that any aid should come through the efforts of the parents and be given to the parents. It does not seem to me in the interests of our democracy to give aid to a school system controlled by clergy. It establishes a dangerous precedent in that it by-passes the citizens involved and recognizes the clergy as their spokesman. . . . In general I can see no real gain in terms of our pluralist society. FRANCES DOYLE.

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OF NOTE

TEN READY REASONS

IN THE JANUARY issue of the *Interracial Review* (20 Vesey St., New York 7, N.Y., $2. per year), Dennis Clark discusses the question of Catholic non-participation in civic affairs, writing under the heading of "Ten Ready Reasons Why Father Is Absent." The major portion of his comment follows:

Like a dutiful Catholic I have tried to deal with some of the more ticklish difficulties with interreligious implications arising out of community relations activity. One of these difficulties is the apparent lack of participation by Catholic priests in general community programs dealing with racial and intergroup problems. Although chaplains of Catholic Interracial Councils have done yeoman work and particularly qualified priests are conspicuous in the field, there have long been worried grumblings about the fact that local pastors and other priests "look bad" when they are absent from community forums where interracial matters are being discussed. Those most conscious of this problem are the Catholics who are immediately involved in community work. Frequently the classic American formula for community moral consensus composed of "Catholic—Protestant—Jew" is truncated into "absentee—Protestant—Jew."

I believe that I have rather unconsciously developed a hopeful response to this problem. Are my non-Catholic friends in the community perturbed by the absence of a priest at their annual conference? Are Catholic protestations of concern for racial problems refuted by a studied reluctance of priests to "get involved"? My reaction is to have ten ready reasons on hand at all times. Each of these polite excuses for absenteeism has a grain of truth to it. There is no basic logic compelling clerical presence at any and all civic functions. But there must be some reasonable explanation for the seemingly solid Catholic abstention from civic involvement in some communities.

Non-Catholics are usually discreet and tolerant about this problem. They hunger for some explanation. They are amazed at "Ten Ready Reasons." They react jovially and happily to ten. Six would be inconclusive. Twenty would be tedious. Ten reasons are just right. They smile and slap your back. "Now I see," they say. "Why didn't you tell us this before?"

Here are my "Ten Ready Reasons" why racial and intergroup relations activities are proceeding without benefit of Catholic clergy in many areas:

1. *Civic and governmental work in intergroup affairs is a layman's responsibility. Priests will not usurp this responsibility.* (This statement shows that priests are not the omnipotent leaders in all affairs that some assume them to be. The temporal order is basically a layman's realm. Nobody will be more reluctant to admit this than Catholic laymen, but, since they are usually absent, too, the point will stand.)
2. *Catholic priests usually have a more extensive series of ritual and liturgical functions than other clergymen. The worship life of Catholicism is very active every day of the week. Then there are the school responsibilities.* (Non-Catholics are understanding of this. They always "see Catholics running to church." One Rabbi said recently, however, that he notes that his neighbor, Father X, always seems to find time to go to ball games. Could such a response be just plain intergroup hostility?)
3. *Priests must be careful about giving scandal concerning interfaith relations. They cannot appear indiscriminately on public occasions where non-Catholic services, etc., may be involved.* (This is a serious, complicated excuse and neutralizes comment. Protestants are puzzled and say, "That should make it easy for Catholics to collaborate in completely secular events." Obviously the logic here is defective.)
4. *Priests refrain from political activities in this great nation where Church and State are separate. Therefore, they are very wary of civic affairs where political undercurrents abound.* (This excuse shows respect for "separation of Church and State." It is thoughtful and leads to discussions of how difficult it is for clergymen to avoid entanglements.)
5. *Many priests grew up in an immigrant environment and are really not assured or conversant with present-day problems of racial change and intergroup difference.* (This begets sympathetic comment about "Catholic ghetto," "cultural lag" and fine "ethnic" priests that we have known.)
6. *Catholic clergymen are not nearly so independent as clergymen of many other groups. Canon Law and a keen commitment to ecclesiastical unity prevent unilateral action on the part of priests. These responsibilities impose a great caution.* (The minister of a small Protestant congregation, who is quite forthright in his determination to deal constructively with racial issues, despite the fact that he and his family are subject to momentary dismissal, destitution and eviction by an angered all-white church membership, finds the pastor's caution highly amusing.)
7. *The attitude of Churchmen varies greatly from diocese to diocese. In some places they lead the way.* (This is a bit like telling the embattled desert platoon about the bubbling springs of water way,

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way across the mountains. It's good for morale.)

8. *Catholics do not exaggerate the racial issue. They keep it in context. There are other moral problems in their comprehensive sights that may have greater urgency.* (This reason is slightly weak when a whole large parish is scrambling to move out to flee Negro newcomers. Obviously such parishioners accord a much higher psychological priority to the racial problem than do others. Careful instruction about the need for modest dresses at the local high school prom does not change this fact.)
9. *Catholics have many ways of meeting racial problems: school institution, the Sacraments, counseling and slow influence. They need not rely upon civic activity alone.* (Whatever their special gifts and methods, Catholics are members of the civic order. After the Presidential election I have twenty-seven pamphlets affirming this fact. We are not going to create any sensational religious effect in American life by running an ecclesiastical cloak and dagger operation.)
10. *American priests, after seminary or monastic training, are shy and do not do well in a relaxed exchange with neighbors.* (Refer to shy, saintly, literary characterizations, and avoid reference to Bing Crosby portrayals, TV personalities or noted Churchmen who give rollicking after-dinner speeches.)

I am working on a list of responses to questions about "Why Catholic Laymen Have Not Reacted to the 1958 Bishops' Statement on Race." This task is much more difficult, since rational explanations such as those above are simply not available.

BOOKS

Policy and Politics of International Life

A HISTORY OF THE COLD WAR. By John Lukacs. Doubleday. $3.95.

By WILLIAM PFAFF

THE DISTINCTION between international policy and international politics needs to be understood, as does the fact of which comes first. There is incessant discussion in the United States of foreign policy, but almost none of politics. Indeed, one is tempted to say that there is an American distrust of politics, that very human, and very dangerous, art. The practice of international politics may be described as the art of investigating the character and quality of nations and civilizations, of understanding their passions, traditions and needs, of considering this volatile mixture compressed and constricted by geography and power, touched by the flames of ideology, ambition, revenge.

The author of this book, John Lukacs, is an historian but an unusual historian in that he is willing to abandon the security of the past and judge the affairs of his own time. As the conscious representative of a European and Christian tradition he attempts here to rescue political discussion from that innocence which is fascinated with organization, power, ideology—but which abjures politics. He is attempting to interpret his world with detachment and perspective, and with a conservative concern for what has made his—Western—civilization the world's intellectual seed-ground and the one place where political liberty has had a relatively secure growth.

Mr. Lukacs' title thus is perhaps a disservice to his book. It suggests merely one more recapitulation of the familiar. His book is a history of the postwar years, but he interprets those years with courage and insight and comments boldly on the forces that have been set loose to work their influence in the future. The author's willingness to judge, and his consciousness of style, make this an almost radical work in a period when political writing is dominated by convention and a concern with the techniques of foreign policy.

The second half of the book, a survey of the movements of contemporary politics, is a singularly important and suggestive intellectual exploration. Mr. Lukacs is not only aware of geopolitical movements; he is interested in the significance of the thickening and deadening of language in America, even in the meaning of the softening of the American face from the hard Anglo-Saxon angularity of Brady photographs. Among his larger conclusions are that the most important of this century's totalitarian movements is national socialism and that it is far from spent, and that the trend of the world is towards the Right—so far as that category still has meaning—rather than the Left.

Mr. Lukacs' central argument in considering the Russian-American conflict is that whatever the course of events in Africa and Asia, the fulcrum of world affairs is Europe—central Europe. He regards the fate of Germany as the most important issue in the cold war, contending that Russia's dominant concern is for her European borderlands and for the power aligned against her in Europe. This is the fact of life for Russia, the endowment (or curse) of history and geography. The author believes that Russia is no less Russia for having become Communist, and that its political ambitions and possibilities are necessarily channelled by the facts of its geographical situation and needs.

He acknowledges the significance of messianic ideology in Russia—by definition, an ambition which surpasses the bounds of conventional political possibility—but he is unwilling to grant that the Communist's belief that the Communist is unique necessarily makes it so. "It

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is in the nature of great revolutionaries to believe that their victory has brought a fundamental change in the relations of the reborn nation with the rest of the world. This belief and attitude, exemplified in Trotsky's famous proclamation of November 1917, addressed to All the Peoples of the World, led the world to believe, and still makes the world believe, that in 1917 History Changed Gears. . . . Yet when a person informs the world that, because of a radical new experience or through a spiritual conversion, his character has changed, we are entitled to take such proclamations with a grain of salt. And even a change in the concept of human nature does not mean that human nature itself has changed. . . . Historical life is stronger than historical theory—especially when that theory, like Marxism, is fundamentally unhistorical."

Mr. Lukacs suggests that the United States attributes greater power and importance—grants greater respect—to the claims of Communist ideology than the facts of recent history warrant. Indeed, that whatever the claims made for Marxism, the Soviet Union under Premier Khrushchev has not allowed its Marxism to contradict the practical demands of policy. But simultaneously American theorists have tended towards an ideological politics that is a kind of negative Marxism. ("We were assured that Stalin's *Problems of Leninism* was always on Dulles' desk. We may be sure that it is not on Khrushchev's.")

This interplay of ideology and pragmatism in the Communist states obviously is of the first importance, for Russia, whatever its instincts for the practical, still lives in Lenin's intellectual world, and China is in the first frenzy of ideological conversion. The Communist commitment to an apocalyptic scheme of history is not, however, reason for an equivalent belief in the West. The crisis, for example, that Russia is likely to experience as its beliefs continue to be refuted by the facts of a world rather larger and more perverse than Lenin knew is a crisis that the West must contain, but need not share. One might invoke DeGaulle's very unMarxist observation, "the future lasts a long time". Mr. Lukacs, that other conservative Western Christian, would doubtless agree.

A parenthetical word must be said about Mr. Lukacs' declaration —his repeated declaration—of his intellectual position. The fortress of classical politics (even to put a name to the position is awkward and limiting) is not so deserted as the author thinks. There are a good many writers and diplomats, not all European and not all Christians, who are alive to the significance of the European tradition, who know the power and resourcefullness of Europe, who acknowledge the limits of politics, and who despise cant. But to know Europe and a tradition does not require one to ignore the power and subtlety of Asian civilizations or to regard the rise of natural science as a calamity. Mr. Lukacs' scorn for "arrogant and weakling scientists" and his insistence upon the "Asiatic" character of Russia seem a little excessive in an Hungarian.

But then Mr. Lukacs' book is all sharp edges. Brilliance is nearly always sharp and tough, and this is a brilliant book, witty, impassioned, endlessly arguable, and a thorough pleasure to read—an honor to both history and politics.

Vision and Craft

ADAM BEFORE HIS MIRROR. By Ned O'Gorman. Harcourt, Brace & World. $3.75.

By SAMUEL HAZO

CATEGORIZATIONS are often misleading, and it is with some hesitation that I say we live in a time of poets, beat poets and poetasters. The true poets (or the strain of true poetry in each of these random categorizations) avoid the schools and movements, continue to be concerned with poetry as a "divination of the spiritual in the things of sense," as a "rhythmical

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creation of beauty," as an inimitable voice. The beat poets go on creating rhapsodic, anarchical or orgiastic verse—occasionally brilliant, basically furious, often profane. The poetasters cluster in "silent generations" and produce poems that are literary counterparts of charades and that end by sounding embarrassingly alike.

Ned O'Gorman is neither a poetaster nor a beat. His first book, *The Night of the Hammer,* set the tone of his real poetic talent, and his second book, *Adam before his Mirror,* confirms it.

In *The Night of the Hammer* there was a poem called "I Am a Dull Mosaic Boy" in which Mr. O'Gorman described himself as a youth, "byzantine and fluid-eyed," to whom each day seemed "remarkable." In *Adam before his Mirror* he is still such a one—stunned into music by his subjects and shifting his kaleidescopic vision here and there with the abandon of a Mercutio. He can say with perfect truth, therefore, in "Toward a Language of the Ineffable" that he is still obsessed with "the continual rush of beauty/that undoes custom and heralds ritual through me like blossoms."

O'Gorman experiences the "rush of beauty" in reading Dante with the "Ionians"—learning both the "rhetoric of hell" and the "possibilities of praise." He experiences it in the sacred silence of wonder when "the mind moves/toward its unutterable quiet." He sees it in the moment of friendship with his former students in a stunning poem called "A Homage to My Jewish Students at Christmas Time."

> But you brought
> God to me unspelled and reasoned
> with my decorous intent and in this season
> of Yahweh's stock I hear severing
> Judith and the salts in my blood
> build effigies and burning villages
> and I think of the time God was on
> mountains and division swam the sea.

What strikes me as the chief of O'Gorman's talents is the spontaneity and range of his imagination. In "Webbed, Yellow-Billed and Aquamarine," for example, he conjures a whimsical lyric about a duck that thought itself a dog because it "was born early to a world of no ducks." In "To Brother Joseph of Mount Savior" he writes of a holy "radical man" who "moved with the gentleness of waters/and the extravagance of lions." This imaginative spontaneity is wedded to O'Gorman's natural sense of color and music. Here is a typical example from "The Day the Steuben Glass Building Breaks"—"Tumblers, tureens, crystal plums,/vast jugs, of mica, cups/and tankards, candelabra, pots/of steaming glacial heat/will fall like honed feathers/on our heads." Here is another from "Great Grandfather, Clam Diggers and Homer"—"At noonday, with bells and gulls/and white sail, a boy, arms red/with the hot light, and an old man/singing glided to the bottom/of the dock where a groom pulled/with

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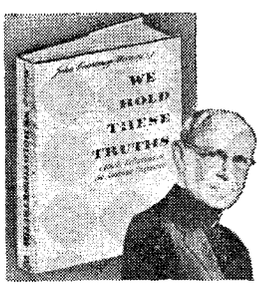

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ropes grecian music to a standstill."

On the book's dust jacket F. A. C. Wilson speaks of the "gentle affirmation" of one of the songs from the five-part "The Days of the Creation of the World," but I find this sequence uneven because the essence of O'Gorman's lyrical-musical-imaginative talent is only obliquely present. "The Death of a Racing-Car Driver" does not quite transcend the violence of its subject despite a plethora of redemptive images in the final two verses. The intrusive influences of Dylan Thomas speak softly from poems like "A Poem in a Time of Deepest Pondering ("as cords of water shine in the bucking light/ high on the plains of my intellect's riding") and "Spring" ("In the zodiac of April, God, being my Governor,/falls in the mint and flowers of the sun"), but they are otherwise quite beautiful poems. These are minor criticisms, but they must be mentioned because they adulterate O'Gorman's talent. And he has an unmistakable lyrical talent that is uniquely his own. In addition, he has all the craft to realize a sensibility that shows itself able to remain fresh. It is not often that we can find lineaments of Puck and Robert Herrick in a modern poet, but he has just that fusion of minstrelsy and vision, this O'Gorman.

Soap-Operatic

THE REFUGEE. By Helen Fowler. Macmillan. $4.50.

By THOMAS P. McDONNELL

IT IS a predilection fatal to the art of the lady-novelist that she finds it so psychically easy, in her writing, to display the soap-opera complex. Unfortunately this is a simple and observable fact, and should not be taken as just another skirmish in the continuing war between the sexes. The mass of evidence shows, in fact, that the whole syndrome of the T.V. daytime serial could be transferred, with a minimum of skill in narrative

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interpolation, to the great bulk of novels by ladies of the pen.

It is not, however, that the ladies cannot write pretty strong stuff. Indeed, Helen Fowler gets *The Refugee* off to a rousing start with a quadruple slaying—two women and two children—count 'em. But the real tragedy is that the soap-opera complex takes over from there, in ecclesiastical overtones, with a vengeance. We are introduced to Father Tom, twin to one of the murdered women. Yet sympathize though we may, it is difficult to feel too well-disposed toward a priest whose first recorded utterance is, "Dip not thy sickle in the dread field of theology."

To begin with, there is Stefan the Bulgarian refugee. Complications back home and the hot Australian sun conspire to snap "Mr. Steffy's" already tenuous connections—and down go Margaret Richards, her two children, and the maid, an unwed mother whose infant son escapes the general elimination. The murders are discovered by good old Bert Johnson, a longshoreman who collects empty bottles in his spare time, and who doesn't want his gifted son, Herb, to become a pansy in velvet pants, by which he means an artist. But in Father Tom's experience in pastoral care this apparently is the first time he has come in contact with Real Folks, ". . . the really good people, the ones who stay good all their lives because, for one thing, they haven't time to learn a lot of fancy sins." Father Tom is a "brilliant young graduate from Louvain."

Finally, it becomes obvious that the refugee in question is not "Mr. Steffy" but Lon Richards, Margaret's money-making husband and a lapsed convert. The whole point is to keep Lon from committing suicide, and Father Tom turns the trick rather neatly by engaging him in the catharsis of a dialogue which one might readily find in any parish pamphlet-rack. The final solution is to convert Lon's property into a Home for Children. So well do things turn out that the only problem left is to decide on a name for the place. Leave it to good old Bert Johnson's wife to come up with the perfect tag. "Why not," she says, "just call it Memories?"

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In foreign affairs, for example, we are what people call "internationalist." We favor the principles behind the United Nations; we believe in united action against Communist aggression; we want world cooperation in the battle against poverty — all of which positions, we believe, are in keeping with the best in Catholic social thought.

Furthermore, we are convinced that the chief political issue today is the struggle between the West and international Communism. To our mind, this far overshadows any domestic concern. Indeed, many domestic concerns are shaped and determined by this struggle — the fact that we are unable to spend as much as we would like in social welfare, for example, is due to the necessity for heavy defense spending.

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— from The Commonweal, May 30, 1958

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